

**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
January 12, 2022  
Zoom Virtual Meeting**

**Present:** Chairman Susan Malan, Brian Weinstein, Robert Day, Tom Nichols, Peter Decker and Jim Vineburgh.

**Absent:**

**CALL TO ORDER:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Malan at 4:11 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Motion made by Brian Weinstein to approve the September and October 2021 minutes. Brian Weinstein approved and Robert Day seconded.

**INTRODUCTION:**

Meeting was held virtually on Zoom. We had a bit of trouble getting in but were able to get everyone in shortly.

**Visitors:** Tom Pinkowish- He has lived in Essex since 2005 and is now interested in possibly joining the commission.

**Updates:**

Susan asked if anyone had any updates? Looks like they were working to elevate Ferry St. so it doesn't flood. Saw people working on but not now. Peter said he heard that something unexpected came up.

Sidewalk at Pratt and Ferry St to Heritage Cove- No updates that anyone has heard in a few months. Heard they may be in line for funding but not positive about that. It has not been discussed at the P&Z meeting in around 6 months or so.

**Planning and Zoning Report:**

Approved Zoning Permits from September to December 2021:

September

Application No. 21-112 – 5 Essex Square, approval for a sign for Magnolia Insurance Agency  
Application No. 21-114 – 5 Essex Square, approval to replace existing signs with new for realtor.

October

Application No. 21-125 – 95 Plains Road, approval for installation of fence along Plains Road  
Application No. 21-126 – 30 Bokum Road Essex Meadows

Application No. 21-131 – 1-3 Main Street Essex, Bushnell Management LLC, approval of sign with light.

#### November

Application No. 21-140 – 8 Novelty Lane, approval for new use as insurance office

Application No. 21-142– 104 Main Street Ivoryton, approval for installation of two columns to support existing overhang.

They pulled this permit for a wayfinding sign- this is just a sign that says Brewery. They are only allowed one sign for their business but wayfinding signs are regulated differently so they can do more. The business sign was part of the original application and it is on the front of the building.

Application No. 21-144 – 6 Main Street, Centerbrook, Surfridge Brewing Co, installation of sign

Application No. 21-146 – 90 Main Street, Centerbrook, Ballard Agency- Farmers Insurance installation of a sign on building on Main Street side.

#### December

Application No. 21-149 – 6 Main Street, Essex, Buttercup properties LLC (aka Olive Olys), installation of an aluminum canopy.

#### Special Exception Applications:

PZC Application 21-11 Special Exception for 7 Main Street Applicant: Essex Village Enterprises, LLC Owner: Liberty Bank proposing the conversion of the existing building to retail and proposed second floor addition within the building footprint for warehouse, storage, breakroom, offices and mechanicals. Approved.

#### Site Plan Review Application:

Zoning Application No. 18-9 Modification to Site Plan at Lofts at Spencer's Corner - Modification pertains to location of the dumpster, reduction of parking spaces, addition of bollards by the handicapped parking spaces, installation of lamp posts, removal of trees, and addition of sidewalks from parking lot to Building #3. Approved with conditions.

PZC Application 21-4 Coastal Site Plan Review- GEI Consultants on behalf of Essex Boat Works proposing to remediate contaminated soil at 9 Ferry Street located within the Coastal Boundary. Approved with conditions.

It is hard to discuss these when we are not exactly sure what was done. Susan is going to ask Carey to join us at the next meeting so that we can have more information on the applications. It would be good to have Carey as it is difficult to keep up with the changing text amendments. Zoning needs a complete rewrite. It was supposed to but was paused when they combined the two committees.

Susan asked if anyone had anything to add. Liberty Bank building was sold on Friday; it will be converted to high-end retail space. Construction has started, the footprint will not change.

**ACTION ITEMS:** None

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Covid-19 update- they were a meeting weekly, then it went monthly, then every other month and now it is back to meeting weekly again. Several businesses have signs that say The Town of Essex strongly recommend (or suggest) wearing masks indoors. All businesses are still open right now.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

POCD- Susan asked if anyone had a chance to look over the link she put on the agenda. Some were able to glance over it. It is not due until 2025 but the EDC is involved in it so we should check it over for goals. When you have some time go over it, it is a great tool to show how the town shaped itself, where it started and where we want to be.

Harbor Management Commission- Brian and Susan are on this commission. We have found that our plan is not strong enough. We had 2 applicants that we turned down based on the plan, the applicants went to DEEP and they allowed it. We are trying to update the plan to make it more bulletproof. HMC is using the Old Lyme plan as a guideline as they are similar to us with the way the harbor is managed. It is on the website- you can look at the draft. What kind of things did they not approve that DEEP did? Placement of docks, expansion and size of docks. Our current plan is not clear enough so there are ways to interpret it. When that happens it is like a snowball effect. We are fully developed from the land point, water too- we have to be careful to protect what we have- not overdevelop. Once the plan is finished, it does have to be approved by DEEP.

Cannabis Sub Committee – David Rosengren (subcommittee member) was to give overview and update but he could not attend. Susan asked if Robert had heard anything about it. He could not but did say that based on the new regulations making recreational marijuana legal- based on Essex population- we are able to have 1 dispensary in town.

Approval of the 2022 EDC Meeting Calendar- Robert Day approved, Brian Weinstein seconded.

**Upcoming Guests and Meeting Locations:**

The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 9, 2022. Maybe in person next month?

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Motion was made by Jim Vineburgh to adjourn the meeting at 4:46 p.m. Peter Decker seconded the motion. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Cindy Sadlowski, Commission Clerk